

Teachers' Perspective on the Phil-IRI Reading Program: Analyzing Challenges, Impacts and Opportunities for Improvement in Flora District in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the perspectives of elementary school teachers in the Flora District, Cordillera Administrative Region, Philippines, regarding the implementation of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) program. Through semi-structured interviews with teachers from fourteen elementary schools, the research identifies key challenges, assesses the program's impact on literacy development, and highlights opportunities for improvement. Findings reveal significant obstacles such as insufficient teacher training, resource constraints, inconsistent program implementation, and limited parental involvement, which hinder the program's effectiveness. Despite these challenges, teachers acknowledge the Phil-IRI's potential to improve reading proficiency when supported by targeted interventions. The study underscores the need for enhanced teacher capacity-building, streamlined administrative processes, contextualized materials, and stronger home-school collaboration. Based on these insights, the study proposes a comprehensive action plan to optimize the Phil-IRI program, ensuring equitable and effective literacy instruction for all learners in rural settings.

Keywords: Phil-IRI, reading program, literacy development, elementary schools

Introduction

Reading is a foundational skill that underpins all areas of learning, enabling students to access knowledge and develop critical skills for active societal participation. Globally, the mastery of reading is recognized as a key driver of educational success, influencing not only academic performance but also lifelong learning and engagement with broader societal goals. However, challenges such as unequal access to resources, teacher preparedness, and systemic barriers often hinder the development of effective reading programs, particularly in under-resourced areas. When reading skills are lacking, learners struggle not only with understanding text but also with broader educational goals, ultimately affecting their academic performance. Developing reading abilities, therefore, becomes essential not just for literacy but for overall academic success, as reading difficulties often lead to disengagement and lower self-confidence among students.

In the Philippines, addressing varied student reading competencies has been a priority for the Department of Education, which introduced the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI). This program is a classroom-based assessment tool administered by the Department of Education (DepEd) to measure and

describe learners' reading performance in English and Filipino. The program is part of the Every Child is a Reader Program, which aims to make every Filipino child a reader and writer at their grade level. The Phil-IRI assesses oral reading, silent reading, and listening comprehension to determine learners' independent, instructional, and frustration levels.

Related studies show the low level of learners concerning reading skills contributes to low reading comprehension as reflected in the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). In Solano High School, it was reported that the reading comprehension levels of Grade 8 students were assessed using the Phil-IRI, and found that 98.7% of respondents fell under the "Frustration" level. The study highlighted the need for reading intervention programs to address the low reading comprehension levels [1].

While the Phil-IRI has proven effective in identifying literacy gaps, its success depends heavily on factors such as teacher training, resource availability, and administrative support—areas where significant disparities exist, especially between urban and rural schools. Teachers in rural areas, like in Flora, Apayao faces unique challenges due to limited resources, training, and support, affecting the program's consistent implementation and the accuracy of reading assessments [6]. Addressing these challenges through targeted interventions and resource allocation could enhance the overall effectiveness of the Phil-IRI.

Teachers' perceptions and experiences also play a critical role in the successful application of the Phil-IRI program, as these influence their ability to administer, interpret, and use the results to inform instruction. While Phil-IRI is generally valued for its detailed approach to reading assessment, some educators feel unprepared to analyze its data due to inconsistent training.

This gap can lead to discrepancies in how reading challenges are addressed across different regions, impacting the uniformity of literacy outcomes nationwide. Strengthening training, support, and resource availability for teachers, especially in under-resourced districts, is essential to maximize the Phil-IRI's potential in improving literacy and helping all students reach their academic goals.

These studies collectively illustrate the strengths of Phil-IRI in enhancing reading instruction and addressing literacy gaps, while also highlighting the persistent challenges in its implementation, especially in under-resourced settings. The recommendations from these studies suggest a need for continuous investment in teacher training, resources, and systemic support to maximize the impact of Phil-IRI in improving literacy outcomes across the Philippines.

The Phil-IRI program requires teachers to administer tests, interpret results, and design appropriate interventions. However, many teachers in rural areas may lack adequate training, resources, and administrative support to fully implement the program. Researching this aspect can shed light on how these factors affect the success of Phil-IRI and uncover specific areas for improvement.

In the Flora District, specific contextual challenges may impact the implementation and effectiveness of the Phil-IRI Reading Program. One primary gap involves **resource and infrastructure limitations** that rural schools often face, including limited access to instructional materials, digital tools, and assessment resources. These constraints can affect teachers' capacity to carry out Phil-IRI assessments as intended, which rely on both adequate materials and a conducive learning environment. Additionally, the lack of internet access and multimedia tools could hinder teachers from accessing supplementary resources or training that might otherwise enhance their ability to administer the program effectively. Understanding how these limitations specifically impact Phil-IRI's success in Flora can highlight potential areas for program support and resource allocation.

Another significant gap lies in the need for **tailored professional development and training** that addresses the unique conditions of rural districts like Flora. While Phil-IRI provides initial standardized training, teachers in Flora may benefit from ongoing, localized training that reflects their specific challenges, such as managing multi-grade classrooms or addressing a broad range of student reading levels.

Moreover, the additional administrative tasks that teachers in rural areas often shoulder may make consistent program implementation difficult, suggesting that a one-size-fits-all training model may not fully prepare teachers in Flora. Examining this gap could reveal how adapting training models could better support teachers' sustained engagement with the program and improve overall implementation fidelity.

Lastly, there is a need to examine the **program's impact on diverse student needs and how effectively it promotes community and parental involvement** within the rural context. Flora District's student population likely includes various reading levels, and many students may face literacy challenges tied to factors such as multilingual backgrounds and limited access to literacy resources at home.

Given these diverse needs, teachers may need to make extensive adaptations to the Phil-IRI program, raising questions about whether a standardized reading program can accommodate Flora's unique learners' demographics.

This study focuses on understanding teachers' perceptions of the Phil-IRI program in the Flora District, examining the challenges they encounter, the impact of the program on student literacy, and the opportunities for improvement. By exploring these areas, the study aims to identify actionable strategies to enhance the program's implementation, particularly in addressing the needs of diverse learners and overcoming the constraints of rural education settings. Additionally, it seeks to propose an action plan based on these findings to support teachers and improve literacy outcomes in the Flora District.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to investigate teachers' perspectives on the Phil-IRI Reading Program in the elementary schools of the Flora District, focusing on analyzing the challenges, impact and opportunities for improvement. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceived challenges faced by teachers in implementing the Phil-IRI Reading Program in the Flora District?
2. What are the specific themes that arise in the perspective of teachers with regard to challenges impact and opportunities?
3. What improvements can be made in the implementation of the Phil-IRI Reading Program by teacher's in the Flora District?
4. What action plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was utilized a qualitative research design as it seeks to understand the subjective experiences and perception of teachers. This design allows for an in-depth analysis of the challenges, impacts, and opportunities related to the implementation of the Phil-IRI reading program. The open-ended nature of qualitative methods enables the exploration of complex and context-specific issues contributing to the program's enhancement and improved reading outcomes for learners.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in 14 schools of Flora, Apayao. Flora is one of the municipalities in the province of Apayao, located in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) of the Philippines. The area is predominantly rural, with communities that rely mainly on agriculture and other locale industries. The schools represent a diverse cross section of the educational landscape in the district, including central and remote schools. These schools were chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of teacher's perspective on the implementation of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) program. By focusing on schools within Flora District, the study aims to analyze the challenges, impacts, and opportunities of the Phil-IRI program as experienced by teachers in various contexts-ranging from those with better resources and support system to those facing geographical and logistical constraints.

This geographical area is chosen for its relevance to the research objectives and its representation of the educational landscape within the district. In terms of demographical features, these schools are passable and easy to reach by land. The schools within the Flora District were chosen due to their active implementation of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) program, nationwide reading assessment tool mandated by the Department of Education (DepEd).

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were selected using purposive sampling technique, specifically targeting elementary schools in the Flora District that implement the Phil-IRI Reading Program. This approach ensures that the participants are well-versed with the program and can provide valuable insights into its implementation, challenges, impacts, and opportunities for improvement. The sample was included teachers who are directly involved in administering the Phil-IRI Reading Program and have firsthand experience with its execution in their respective schools.

Distribution of Respondents per School and the Respondents per Category.

Name of School	No. of Respondent
Anninipan Elementary School	1
Atok Elementary School	1
Bagutong Elementary School	2
Balluyan Elementary School	1
Flora Central School	2
Flora East Central School	1
Greenhills Elementary School	2
Malayugan Elementary School	2
Mallig Elementary School	2
Malubibit Norte Elementary School	1
Malubibit Sur Elementary School	1
San Jose Elementary School	1
Sta. Maria Elementary School	2
Tamalunog Elementary School	1

Research Instruments

The research instruments were designed to align with the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model and would focus on gathering detailed qualitative data through semi-structured questionnaires. The semi-structured interview guide would include several sections, each targeting different aspects of the research questions. Section A is on challenges in implementing the program, section B is on the specific themes that arise with regards to challenges impact and opportunities, section C is the opportunities for improvement and section D is the suggested elements to be included in the action plan.

Data Gathering Procedure

A request letter would be addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent of the Schools Division of Apayao to seek approval for the conduct of the study. After which, the researcher would ask permission to conduct the study from the Public Schools District Supervisor of Flora district then to the principals and to the teachers of the elementary schools in the said district. Upon approval, the researcher would utilize her time to conduct the study.

The semi structured interviews would be administered to the selected teachers following based on the questions included in the questionnaire. In addition to individual interviews, focus group discussions would be conducted to facilitate collective exploration of the research questions. The focus group discussion guide would include prompts to encourage dialogue and capture diverse perspectives. Document analysis would also be integrated to review relevant documents such as program reports, teachers' feedback forms, and implementation guidelines to complement the data collected through interviews and focus groups.

Once the data is collected, thematic analysis would be employed to identify common themes and patterns in the qualitative data. This involves coding the data, categorizing the codes into themes, and interpreting the findings to understand the teachers' perspectives on challenges, impacts, and opportunities for improvement. The findings from the data analysis would be used to develop a proposed action plan aimed at enhancing the implementation of the Phil-IRI Reading Program. This action plan would include practical recommendations for policymakers, school administrators, and teachers.

The final step would involve validation and verification of the findings, ensuring accuracy and reliability.

Statistical Treatment of Data

To investigate teachers' perspectives on the Phil-IRI Reading Program in the elementary schools of the Flora District, focusing on analyzing the challenges, impact and opportunities for improvement, the researcher would use thematic analysis in reporting the gathered data from the respondents.

Common themes related to the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the Phil-IRI Reading Program, including its impact, opportunities and elements to be consider in crafting the action plan. Identifying themes involve systematically coding the data by highlighting key phrases and assigning labels (codes) that capture the essence of the responses then categorize these codes into broader themes, and interpreting the patterns that emerge. After which, define what each theme represents and assign descriptive names. Finally, present the findings by describing the themes and supporting them with quotes from the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1.Perceived challenges faced by teachers in implementing the Phil-IRI Reading Program in the Flora District.

Verbalizations:

Teacher 1: Insufficient training in administering and interpreting the Phil-IRI tools.

Teacher 2: Confusion about guidelines, especially when updates are released without proper dissemination.

Teacher 3: Need continuous capacity building on how to effectively address reading difficulties.

Teacher 4: Large class sizes mean not all students get adequately assessed or followed up.

Teacher 5: Lack of age- and level-appropriate reading materials for interventions.

Teacher 6: Some students are not proficient in the language of the reading assessment (typically English or Filipino), especially in communities where a local dialect is dominant.

Teacher 7: Many parents are unable or unavailable to support reading activities at home.

Teacher 8: Follow-up programs for struggling readers are sometimes inconsistent or unavailable.

Teacher 9: Poor internet connectivity limits teacher access to updated resources and support.

Teacher 10: Students who struggle with reading may become discouraged and unmotivated.

Teacher 11: Chronic absenteeism affects the continuity and reliability of reading interventions.

Teacher 12: Lack time, manpower, or resources to deliver one-on-one or small group instruction.

Teacher 13: Schools within the same district may interpret or implement the program differently, leading to inconsistencies in assessment results and interventions.

Teacher 14: Teachers sometimes don't receive enough guidance on how to translate data into effective instruction.

Teacher 15: Peer mentoring or shared best practices are limited, reducing program effectiveness.

Teacher 16: Juggle multiple tasks, and the Phil-IRI assessment is time-consuming, especially the individual oral reading tests.

Teacher 17: Teachers are burdened by the documentation required for tracking reading levels and interventions.

Teacher 18: Some schools lack designated reading corners or quiet spaces necessary for reading activities.

Teacher 19: Absence of incentives or acknowledgment contributes to low morale or passive compliance.

Teacher 20: Students may feel pressured or anxious during reading assessments, affecting their performance and the accuracy of results.

Table 1: Matrix of Perceived Challenges in Implementing the Phil-IRI Program

Core Idea	Subtheme	Theme
Insufficient training in administering and interpreting the Phil-IRI tools.	Lack of training	Capacity and Competence Issues
Confusion about guidelines, especially when updates are released without proper dissemination.	Poor dissemination of guidelines	
Need continuous capacity building on how to effectively address reading difficulties.	Lack of professional development	

Teachers sometimes don't receive enough guidance on how to translate data into instruction.	Lack of support in instructional planning	Program Implementation Gaps Program
Peer mentoring or shared best practices are limited.	Limited collaboration among teachers	
Follow-up programs for struggling readers are sometimes inconsistent or unavailable.	Weak remediation and support systems	
Schools within the same district may interpret or implement the program differently.	Inconsistent implementation	
Juggle multiple tasks, and the Phil-IRI assessment is time-consuming.	Time constraints and workload	Teacher Workload and Time Management
Lack time, manpower, or resources for individualized instruction.	Inability to give individualized instruction	
Large class sizes mean not all students are adequately assessed or followed up.	Overcrowded classrooms	
Teachers are burdened by the documentation required for tracking reading levels.	Administrative overload	
Lack of age- and level-appropriate reading materials for interventions.	Inadequate instructional materials	Resource Constraints
Poor internet connectivity limits access to updated resources and support.	Technological limitations	
Some schools lack designated reading corners or quiet spaces.	Poor infrastructure	
Some students are not proficient in the language of the reading assessment.	Language barriers	Learner-Related Challenges
Chronic absenteeism affects continuity of reading interventions.	Irregular student attendance	
Students who struggle with reading become discouraged and unmotivated.	Low student motivation	
Students may feel pressured or anxious during reading assessments.	Assessment anxiety	
Many parents are unable or unavailable to support reading at home.	Low parental involvement	Home-School Collaboration Issues

Capacity and Competence Issues

This theme highlights the lack of training, guidance, and professional development that teachers experience in using the Phil-IRI tools effectively. Teachers expressed that they are often unfamiliar with administration protocols and lack the skills to interpret results or translate them into instructional strategies. Confusion also arises from poor dissemination of updated guidelines, which hinders consistent implementation. Overall, this theme emphasizes the need for systematic and continuous capacity building to improve teacher readiness and effectiveness in the reading program.

Program Implementation Gaps

This theme focuses on structural and procedural inconsistencies in how the Phil-IRI program is delivered. Teachers cited the absence of clear follow-up programs, inconsistent interpretation of the guidelines across schools, and limited opportunities for peer collaboration or mentoring. These gaps result in fragmented implementation, where some learners may benefit while others are left behind. The lack of support in interpreting data and adjusting instruction further weakens the program's impact.

Teacher Workload and Time Management

Teachers reported feeling overburdened by the demands of the Phil-IRI program, particularly the time-consuming nature of individual assessments. Combined with large class sizes, the workload makes it challenging to give adequate attention to each student. The additional paperwork and reporting requirements further strain their limited time. The inability to carry out small group or one-on-one instruction due to these constraints undermines the program's effectiveness. This theme underscores the need for streamlined processes and manpower support.

Resource Constraints

Several teachers pointed out that the lack of instructional materials, such as age-appropriate reading texts, and poor school infrastructure (e.g., no reading corners or quiet spaces), directly affect the quality of reading instruction and assessment. Additionally, poor internet connectivity limits access to updated Phil-IRI guidelines, digital resources, and professional development. These limitations create an environment that is not conducive to optimal program delivery, highlighting the need for material and infrastructural investment.

Learner-Related Challenges

This theme reveals how student-specific factors hinder Phil-IRI implementation. Many learners are not proficient in the assessment language, especially in dialect-speaking communities, which affects test accuracy. Teachers also observe chronic absenteeism, low reading motivation, and test anxiety among students, all of which negatively impact performance and continuity in reading development. Addressing these challenges requires culturally responsive instruction and emotional support systems for learners.

Home-School Collaboration Issues

Teachers emphasized that parental support at home is often lacking, making it difficult to reinforce reading skills outside school. This disconnect affects student progress, especially for struggling readers who need consistent practice. Strengthening home-school partnerships and parent education on reading support strategies could improve student outcomes and enhance program effectiveness.

The responses from teacher participants regarding the implementation of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) reveal several challenges that hinder the effective use of the program. One of the primary issues identified was insufficient training for teachers, with several responses mentioning the need for more LAC sessions and seminars on literacy development. This reflects the findings of [13], who found that teachers' effectiveness in administering diagnostic tools like Phil-IRI is significantly enhanced through continuous professional development. Additionally, the responses highlighted limited access to resources, particularly books, in rural areas. This lack of resources is consistent with the broader challenges identified by [14], which reported that literacy programs in developing countries often struggle due to inadequate learning materials and underfunded school libraries.

Another significant challenge cited was time management, with participants highlighting the time-consuming nature of the reading interventions and the heavy workloads teachers are expected to manage. This finding aligns with the research by [15], who emphasized that the multiple roles assigned to teachers in Philippine public schools—such as administrative tasks, co-curricular responsibilities, and instructional duties—result in limited time for dedicated reading assessments. Furthermore, teachers pointed to a large number of students with frustration-level reading, suggesting a need for more targeted interventions to address reading difficulties, a point also noted by [16], who highlighted that without appropriate support systems, identifying students at risk through Phil-IRI does not necessarily lead to improved reading outcomes.

In conclusion, the challenges faced by teachers in implementing Phil-IRI are multifaceted, ranging from issues related to time management and training to resource constraints and insufficient administrative support. These barriers significantly impact the program's effectiveness and suggest that addressing these challenges requires a systemic approach, including more focused teacher training, increased resource allocation, and stronger administrative leadership to support literacy initiatives.

2. Specific themes that arise in the perspective of teachers with regard to challenges, impact and opportunities.

Verbalizations:

Teacher 1: Unprepared to administer and interpret Phil-IRI due to limited or outdated training.

Teacher 2: The program adds significant pressure due to one-on-one testing, paperwork, and competing responsibilities.

Teacher 3: Lack of leveled reading books, digital tools, and conducive learning environments limits program effectiveness.

Teacher 4: Students' limited proficiency in English or Filipino hinders their ability to perform well in assessments.

Teacher 5: Minimal home reading reinforcement due to parents' limited time, literacy skills, or awareness.

Teacher 6: Varying practices and standards across schools lead to disparities in how Phil-IRI is carried out.

Teacher 7: Teachers feel undervalued and unmotivated due to lack of acknowledgment and incentives.

Teacher 8: Poor implementation and time pressure lead to unreliable data that hinders meaningful interventions.

Teacher 9: Without consistent follow-up, students needing support often fall further behind.

Teacher 10: Overburdened teachers experience fatigue, reducing their effectiveness and enthusiasm for the program.

Teacher 11: Struggling readers may feel discouraged, leading to lack of participation, absenteeism, or fear of being assessed.

Teacher 12: Inconsistent implementation across schools means some students receive better support than others.

Teacher 13: Teachers are eager for more workshops on assessment analysis and differentiated reading instruction.

Teacher 14: Providing level-appropriate books, digital access, and reading corners can greatly enhance delivery.

Teacher 15: Establishing remediation frameworks and assigning reading coordinators can help sustain student progress.

Teacher 16: Parent engagement programs can bridge the gap between classroom learning and home support.

Teacher 17: Acknowledging teacher efforts—formally or informally—can boost morale and commitment.

Teacher 18: Peer mentoring and sharing best practices can foster more consistent and effective program execution.

Teacher 19: Teachers struggle to provide appropriate reading instruction tailored to varied student reading levels due to lack of tools or strategies.

Teacher 20: Time spent on assessment reduces the time available for teaching and engaging in enrichment activities.

Table 2: Matrix of Perceived Challenges, Impacts, and Opportunities

Core Idea	Subtheme	Theme
Insufficient training in administering and interpreting the Phil-IRI tools	Lack of training	Capacity and Competence Issues
Peer mentoring or shared best practices are limited	Limited collaboration	
Teachers lack guidance on translating data into effective instruction	Lack of instructional guidance	
Confusion due to updates not being properly disseminated	Poor dissemination of guidelines	
Teachers need ongoing support to address reading difficulties	Need for professional development	
Follow-up programs for struggling readers are inconsistent or unavailable	Inconsistent follow-up interventions	Program Implementation Gaps
Different schools interpret or implement the program inconsistently	Inconsistent implementation	
Phil-IRI assessment, especially oral reading, is time-consuming	Time constraints	Teacher Workload and Time Management
Lack of time, manpower, and resources for small group instruction	Lack of manpower	
Large class sizes hinder full assessment and follow-up	Overcrowded classrooms	

Documentation requirements are burdensome	Administrative burden	
Lack of appropriate reading materials for student levels	Lack of instructional materials	Resource Constraints
Poor internet connectivity limits access to resources	Technological limitations	
Schools lack quiet spaces or reading corners	Inadequate infrastructure	
Students are not proficient in the assessment language	Language barriers	Learner-Related Challenges
Chronic absenteeism disrupts intervention efforts	Absenteeism	
Struggling students lose motivation to continue reading	Low motivation	
Students feel pressured and anxious during reading tests	Assessment anxiety	
Absence of incentives or recognition lowers morale	Lack of incentives	Teacher Morale and Motivation
Parents are often unable to support reading at home	Limited parental support	Home-School Collaboration Issues

Capacity and Competence Issues

This theme centers on teachers' preparedness and skill in implementing the Phil-IRI effectively. Several teachers expressed concerns about insufficient training, lack of mentorship, and unclear guidelines. Many feel unequipped to interpret assessment results and use them to inform instruction. The lack of regular capacity-building initiatives or professional development worsens the gap, leading to a compromised delivery of the program.

Program Implementation Gaps

This theme reflects inconsistencies in how the Phil-IRI program is carried out across different schools. Some teachers noted the absence or irregularity of follow-up interventions for struggling readers. Others pointed out that implementation standards vary from school to school, causing discrepancies in the assessment process and overall outcomes.

Teacher Workload and Time Management

Many teachers are overwhelmed by the volume of responsibilities they carry. Administering the Phil-IRI, especially the oral reading assessments, is time-intensive and difficult to balance with other teaching tasks. The challenge is compounded by large class sizes and the need to document and track student progress thoroughly. These constraints limit teachers' ability to provide individualized instruction and timely intervention.

Resource Constraints

The successful implementation of reading programs like Phil-IRI also depends on available materials and facilities. Teachers reported a shortage of appropriate reading resources suited for different age and skill levels. Poor internet connectivity and lack of designated reading areas further impede the program's effectiveness.

Learner-Related Challenges

This theme addresses factors related to students' abilities, behavior, and emotions. Teachers observed that some students, especially those from dialect-speaking communities, struggle with assessments in English or Filipino. Others face challenges such as absenteeism, low motivation, and test anxiety. These learner-related barriers impact both the assessment accuracy and the success of interventions.

Teacher Morale and Motivation

Teachers' morale is crucial for the successful execution of any educational program. Several noted a lack of acknowledgment or incentives for implementing Phil-IRI, leading to passive compliance rather than active engagement. When effort goes unrecognized, it reduces the enthusiasm and commitment needed to deliver interventions meaningfully.

Home-School Collaboration Issues

Parental involvement is an important aspect of reinforcing reading skills at home. However, many teachers stated that parents are either unable or unavailable to assist with reading practice. This lack of support from home hinders students' progress, especially for those who already struggle in school.

The identified challenges in implementing the Phil-IRI program appear to have a substantial impact on the teachers' ability to deliver effective reading instruction. Several participants noted that these difficulties have a great impact, with one teacher observing that learners often do absenteeism, which undermines the validity of the assessment results. This problem is compounded by the issue of inaccurate assessments caused by a lack of proper training, as mentioned by respondents. According to [17], insufficient training on assessment tools like Phil-IRI can lead to misinterpretation of results, which in turn affects the design and effectiveness of reading interventions. Teachers also noted that these challenges negatively affect lesson preparation, resulting in poor learner outputs and a diminished capacity for effective instruction and follow-up.

In response to these difficulties, some teachers have taken individual initiative by engaging in self-study, dedicating personal time to review the Phil-IRI manuals. Others have attempted to cope by bringing teaching-related activities home, which, while admirable, reflects the unsustainable demands placed on teachers. This mirrors the findings of [18], who reported that many Filipino educators engage in unpaid overtime to meet their instructional responsibilities, especially when implementing specialized programs. The fact that students can sometimes pass assessments through guessing further points to the need for more engaging, reliable, and instructionally aligned assessment practices. Overall, the data suggest that unless teachers are given adequate training, planning time, and systemic support, the implementation of Phil-IRI will continue to face limitations in improving literacy outcomes.

The challenges faced by teachers in delivering effective reading instruction have had notable consequences on student outcomes. Teachers shared instances where learners demonstrated a lack of understanding, experienced inconsistent learning, and showed signs of frustration and disengagement. These issues often

stem from unreliable assessments, lack of proper instructional training, and the pressure to deliver content without sufficient support. Research by [19] highlights that student engagement is a key predictor of academic success in reading, and disengaged learners are less likely to develop strong reading comprehension skills. The emotional toll, as described by teachers, can lead to diminished confidence and increased disinterest, ultimately affecting overall learning experiences.

When asked whether the impact was more evident in reading scores, engagement, or attendance, teachers identified that the primary effects were on reading scores and student engagement. This aligns with the findings of [20], who emphasized that poor engagement and insufficient instructional support often result in low achievement in reading assessments. Learners who consistently encounter difficulty in reading without meaningful intervention are more likely to score poorly and withdraw from active participation in class activities.

To manage these challenges, teachers responded by implementing more relevant motivational strategies and designing engaging learning activities to sustain student interest and participation. These adaptive practices resonate with the principles of culturally responsive teaching and learner-centered pedagogy, as emphasized by [21], which advocate for relevance, engagement, and active learning as essential components in addressing student needs and improving outcomes. While such interventions reflect commendable initiative, they also point to a broader need for systemic support, such as targeted professional development and resource allocation, to help teachers respond more effectively to diverse reading challenges in the classroom.

The data in Table 2 demonstrate that the Phil-IRI Reading Program has had a significant impact on enhancing learners' reading abilities. Teachers noted that many students progressed from the frustration level to practicing independent reading, showing marked improvements in word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. These findings are supported by the Department of Education (DepEd, 2021), which emphasized that the Phil-IRI serves as a crucial tool in identifying reading levels and guiding targeted interventions to address reading difficulties. Increased student engagement in reading activities was also highlighted, as learners became more active and interested in reading tasks. This observation aligns with the findings of [22], who reported that reading programs incorporating individualized and level-appropriate materials result in greater learner motivation and participation.

Teachers specifically observed improvements in fluency and comprehension skills, key indicators of reading proficiency. According to [23], repeated reading and guided oral reading strategies, which are components of the Phil-IRI intervention, significantly enhance fluency and understanding, especially among struggling readers. Furthermore, teachers acknowledged that the effectiveness of the program largely depends on how well the data from Phil-IRI assessments are used to plan instruction. Research by [24] supports this, stating that teacher-led, data-driven instruction is essential for the success of reading interventions in Philippine classrooms.

Success stories shared by teachers further illustrate the program's impact. For example, students previously identified as non-readers eventually developed confidence and began participating in reading activities after consistent practice and positive reinforcement. This reflects the importance of learner-centered approaches and consistent support, as emphasized by [25], who found that scaffolding techniques such as modeling and repeated exposure to texts help build both reading competence and self-esteem among early-grade learners. Overall, the Phil-IRI Reading Program, when implemented effectively, has proven to be a vital tool for improving reading outcomes and fostering student confidence and engagement.

3. Improvement can be made in the implementation of the Phil-IRI Reading Program

Verbalizations:

Teacher 1: Regular workshops on administering, scoring, and interpreting Phil-IRI.

Teacher 2: Training on differentiated reading strategies and interventions.

Teacher 3: Simplifying documentation, minimizing redundant tasks, and assigning support personnel.

Teacher 4: Dedicated reading corners or quiet spaces in classrooms for assessment and follow-up activities.

Teacher 5: Provide clear, updated, and standardized guidelines.

Teacher 6: Create a monitoring system to ensure uniform implementation and data use.

Teacher 7: Develop school-based reading intervention schedules.

Teacher 8: Track students' reading progress through follow-up assessments.

Teacher 9: Conduct parent literacy orientation sessions.

Teacher 10: Send home reading materials or family reading logs.

Teacher 11: Encourage parents to read with their children, regardless of literacy level.

Teacher 12: Allow teachers to share strategies and interventions that worked.

Teacher 13: Organize cluster-based reading workshops or learning circles.

Teacher 14: Use digital tools or apps to record oral reading fluency and automatically track errors.

Teacher 15: Include culturally relevant reading selections that students can relate to and understand more easily.

Teacher 16: Conducting regular performance reviews and coaching visits focused on reading program effectiveness.

Teacher 17: Encourage regular reflection sessions where reading data is reviewed to guide action.

Teacher 18: Gather student reflections to improve materials and reduce assessment anxiety.

Teacher 19: Intensive, individualized support for struggling readers.

Teacher 20: Conduct post-implementation feedback surveys with teachers to assess pain points and suggestions.

Table 3: Matrix: Improvement Areas in the Phil-IRI Reading Program Implementation

Core Idea	Subtheme	Theme
Regular workshops on Phil-IRI administration and interpretation	Technical training on Phil-IRI	Capacity Building and Professional Development
Training on differentiated reading strategies and interventions	Instructional strategy training	
Allow teachers to share strategies and interventions that worked	Peer learning and collaboration	
Organize cluster-based reading workshops or learning circles	Collaborative development	
Conduct regular performance reviews and coaching visits	Instructional coaching and monitoring	
Provide clear, updated, and standardized guidelines	Clarity in guidelines	Program Implementation and Management

Create a monitoring system to ensure uniform implementation and data use	Program consistency and accountability	
Conduct post-implementation feedback surveys with teachers	Feedback and continuous improvement	
Encourage regular reflection sessions on reading data	Data-driven decision-making	
Simplify documentation and assign support staff	Administrative burden relief	Teacher Support and Workload Reduction
Develop school-based reading intervention schedules	Structured intervention time	
Dedicated reading corners or quiet spaces in classrooms	Physical environment	Resource and Infrastructure Enhancement
Use digital tools or apps for fluency tracking and error recording	Technological support	
Include culturally relevant reading selections	Contextual relevance of materials	
Track students' reading progress through follow-up assessments	Monitoring student progress	Assessment and Intervention Practices
Intensive, individualized support for struggling readers	Focused intervention	
Gather student reflections to improve materials and reduce assessment anxiety	Student-centered assessment	
Conduct parent literacy orientation sessions	Parental education and involvement	Home-School Partnership
Send home reading materials or family reading logs	Home-based reading activities	
Encourage parents to read with their children, regardless of literacy level	Family engagement in learning	

Capacity Building and Professional Development

This theme focuses on empowering teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement Phil-IRI effectively. Teachers expressed the need for regular workshops, peer collaboration, and instructional coaching to improve their competence in administering assessments, interpreting results, and delivering appropriate interventions. Continuous learning and community-based practices like cluster workshops and strategy sharing also help ensure sustainable program success.

Program Implementation and Management

Teachers called for better structure and governance of the Phil-IRI program. This includes providing clear, consistent guidelines, establishing a monitoring system, and using feedback loops such as surveys and

reflection sessions to continuously improve the implementation. These measures aim to eliminate inconsistencies across schools and enhance accountability and standardization.

Teacher Support and Workload Reduction

This theme addresses the heavy workload and limited manpower that hinder effective implementation. Teachers recommend minimizing redundant paperwork, assigning support personnel, and creating dedicated time for reading interventions. These steps would help teachers focus more on instruction and engagement rather than administrative tasks.

Resource and Infrastructure Enhancement

Successful implementation requires the right tools and spaces. Teachers requested resources like reading corners, digital tools for tracking assessments, and contextualized reading materials that reflect local culture and student experiences. These improvements make reading assessments more effective and relatable for learners.

Assessment and Intervention Practices

This theme emphasizes the importance of ongoing student monitoring and individualized interventions. Teachers recommended the use of follow-up assessments, personalized support for struggling readers, and student reflection to guide instructional adjustments. These practices help tailor support based on each learner's needs.

Home-School Partnership

Teachers highlighted the need to strengthen collaboration with families, particularly in communities where parental literacy may be limited. Suggestions include orienting parents, sending home reading logs, and encouraging shared reading at home to reinforce literacy development. Parental involvement is vital for sustaining reading habits outside the classroom.

The responses of the participants as shown in table 3 reveal a clear call for improvements in both the materials and the delivery of the Phil-IRI Reading Program. Participants emphasized the importance of providing diverse reading resources, including both printed and digital materials, to cater to learners' varying reading levels. According to [17], engagement in reading improves when students have access to diverse and interesting texts that match their reading levels and interests. Moreover, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory also supports this aspect as he highlighted the importance of tools and mediated learning, which includes both physical tools (like books and tablets) and social tools (like teacher guidance) to scaffold learning.

Aside from resources, the respondents gave also emphasis on the comprehensive teacher training, organize cluster-based reading workshop, dedicated reading corners, track students reading progress, parental involvement, and scheduled reading times to enhance delivery of the program. These suggestions align with the findings of [26], who emphasized the value of tailored reading materials and the integration of technology in promoting literacy among Filipino learners. Likewise, the study by [27] highlighted that digital tools, when used appropriately, improve student engagement and reading comprehension. However, specific improvements were suggested by the participants for the Phil-IRI Reading Program such as inadequate time and monitoring strategies, suggesting the need for a more structured approach.

While these responses are well-supported by current educational trends in the Philippines, some critics like [28] argue that focusing too heavily on digital tools without strengthening foundational reading skills can distract from more critical literacy objectives.

Based on table 3, the respondents highlighted several areas where administrative support could significantly improve outcomes, including providing sufficient time, allocating appropriate resources, and ensuring continuous training and coaching for both new and experienced teachers. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of a positive school culture, strong collaboration among teachers, and active parent and community involvement. These elements create an environment conducive to literacy development and sustain the momentum of reading programs over time.

These views by the respondents are supported by the findings of [29], who concluded that school leadership and administrative support directly influence the effectiveness of literacy programs through policy, planning, and logistical aid. The importance of teacher coaching and technical assistance was further confirmed by [30], who found that schools with ongoing professional support performed better in reading diagnostics. However, some recent discussions, such as those by [31], caution that administrative support must go beyond logistics and should involve shared decision-making processes to fully empower teachers.

Table 3, reflects the identified various shortcomings of the Phil-IRI program by the respondents. Teachers expressed a strong need for capacity-building in crucial areas such as preparing reading materials for various learner levels, vocabulary instruction, behavioral management, comprehension pedagogy, and differentiated instruction. These needs reflect the increasing complexity and diversity of classroom contexts, requiring teachers to be equipped with both theoretical understanding and practical strategies to address a wide range of reading abilities. Teachers also stressed the need for tools that accommodate varying learner profiles, such as audiobooks, digital assessments, and interactive read-along resources. These findings are being supported by the study of [32] as they emphasized the importance of multimodal learning tools and differentiated instruction in improving reading outcomes in multilingual classrooms. Moreover, [33] argued that regular and responsive professional development allows teachers to better address diverse learner needs.

On the other hand, the reliance on ICT tools was critiqued by [34], who suggested that many rural schools lack stable internet access and digital infrastructure, making it difficult to implement technology-heavy programs equitably.

Overall, the responses given by the respondents suggest that for the Phil-IRI program to fully achieve its objectives, it must adopt a comprehensive approach—one that goes beyond tool provision and includes sustained teacher training, on-the-ground support, and careful consideration of local school conditions. A contextualized, inclusive, and well-supported reading program is vital for addressing learning gaps and improving literacy outcomes among Filipino learners.

Teacher support and improved curriculum materials were also emphasized by respondents. Recent studies, like [44], highlight the importance of continuous professional development for teachers. Teachers who receive ongoing training and resources are better equipped to help students succeed. Additionally, engaging parents and the community in the program is crucial. [45] shows that when parents and the community are involved, students tend to perform better because there is more support for their learning both inside and outside the classroom. The need for implementation and monitoring was also highlighted. [46] explains that regularly monitoring a program helps identify problems early, making it easier to adjust

strategies and improve outcomes. Monitoring ensures that the program stays on track and allows for real-time feedback, which is essential for improving the effectiveness of the program.

Evaluation and revision of the program were also seen as essential for its long-term success. [47] note that continuous evaluation allows educators to measure the program's impact and make necessary adjustments. By evaluating the program regularly, educators can ensure that it remains effective and relevant.

Finally, respondents emphasized the need for adequate resources and funding to ensure the program's success. Research by [48] confirms that programs with sufficient financial support are more likely to succeed. This includes funding for teaching materials, professional development, and creating a supportive learning environment for students.

In terms of implementation, respondents emphasized planning and preparation, such as conducting a needs assessment and establishing clear goals. [49] argue that having a clear plan in place is crucial for the success of any educational program, as it provides structure and guidance throughout the process.

In conclusion, the key elements identified in Table 1—such as clear goals, data-driven decisions, teacher support, community involvement, monitoring, and evaluation—are all critical for improving the Phil-IRI Reading Program. These elements are supported by current educational research and provide a strong foundation for creating a successful reading program that meets the needs of students.

Respondents also mentioned the importance of establishing a shared vision and goals. According to [46], a shared vision among educators, administrators, and policymakers is essential for driving improvements in educational programs. When all stakeholders are aligned on the goals of the program, they are more likely to work collaboratively and effectively toward achieving them.

Furthermore, providing sufficient time for the program to be fully implemented and evaluated was emphasized as a critical factor for success. [49] argue that giving educators enough time to plan, implement, and assess the program is crucial for ensuring its effectiveness. Rushed implementation can lead to poor outcomes, while adequate time allows for adjustments and improvements.

Clear communication is also vital for effective collaboration. [42] stress the importance of clear and open communication channels among teachers, administrators, and policymakers. When communication is transparent and frequent, it helps avoid misunderstandings, clarifies expectations, and fosters a sense of shared responsibility for the program's success.

In summary, the key strategies for enhancing collaboration to improve the Phil-IRI program include monitoring, mutual support, data sharing, establishing a shared vision, and allocating enough time for effective implementation. These practices are well-supported by current research, which emphasizes that collaboration among teachers, administrators, and policymakers is essential for the success of educational programs.

Proposed Action Plan to Improve the Phil-IRI Reading Program

Based on the findings of the study, the following comprehensive action plan is proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the Phil-IRI Reading Program. This plan focuses on collaborative engagement, strategic implementation, and continuous monitoring and evaluation to improve reading outcomes among learners.

Key Area	Proposed Action Steps	Expected Outcomes	Person Responsible	Timeline
1. Clear Program Goals and Objectives	Develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals aligned with reading benchmarks.	Clear goals to guide implementation and evaluation.	School Head, Reading Coordinator	June
2. Needs Assessment	Conduct baseline assessments on learners' reading levels, teacher readiness, and available materials.	Gaps and needs are identified based on data.	Teachers, Reading Coordinator	June
3. Teacher Training and Support	Provide continuous training on Phil-IRI, intervention strategies, and assessment literacy.	Improved teacher competence in reading instruction.	School Head, District Supervisor	July – August
4. Curriculum and Materials	Review and update reading materials to be engaging, level-appropriate, and culturally relevant.	Learners have access to improved and varied reading materials.	Teachers, Librarian, LRMDs Coordinator	July – September
5. Parent and Community Involvement	Conduct reading awareness campaigns and parent orientations on how to support reading at home.	Increased support from parents and community in learners' reading progress.	Teachers, School Head, PTA Officers	August – December
6. Implementation and Monitoring	Assign roles, schedule classroom observations, and	Program is implemented consistently and issues are addressed early.	School Head, Reading Coordinator, Teachers	July – March

	monitor progress regularly.			
7. Data-Driven Decision Making	Use Phil-IRI results to inform instruction; analyze reading data to plan interventions.	More effective teaching strategies based on learner performance.	Teachers, Reading Coordinator	Quarterly (every 3 months)
8. Evaluation and Revision	Conduct mid-year and end-of-year reviews; revise action plan based on results and feedback.	Program improves continuously based on evidence and feedback.	School Head, Reading Team	December and March
9. Funding and Resources	Allocate budget for materials and training; seek external support (LGU, NGOs).	Program is well-resourced and sustainably supported.	School Head, Budget Officer, Stakeholders	Year round

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary:

This study investigated the perspectives of elementary school teachers in the Flora District regarding the implementation of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Reading Program. It focused on identifying the challenges encountered by teachers, as well as exploring their insights into the program's overall impact and areas for improvement. Through qualitative data gathered from teacher responses, the study revealed several key issues, including a lack of sufficient reading materials, limited parental involvement, time constraints in implementing reading activities, and the need for ongoing teacher training. In addition, the study highlighted recurring themes such as the importance of peer-assisted learning strategies, data-driven instruction, community engagement, and motivation-based approaches. These findings underscored the importance of a supportive environment, resource accessibility, and sustained professional development for teachers. Based on the results, a set of practical recommendations and an action plan were proposed to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Phil-IRI Reading Program in the district.

The data collected from teachers reveal several challenges faced in delivering effective reading instruction. Teachers reported that students do not take assessments seriously, often guessing answers, which leads to inaccurate evaluations. Additionally, the teachers cited lack of proper training as a barrier to effective assessment, impacting their ability to accurately gauge student progress. These issues directly affect their lesson preparation, delivery, and follow-up activities, resulting in poor student outputs and engagement. The data also reflect that these challenges have significant consequences on student outcomes, particularly in reading scores and engagement. Teachers indicated that students often lack understanding, resulting in

inconsistent learning experiences. Frustration and disengagement from learners were also noted, which contributed to a decline in student participation and academic performance.

In response to these challenges, teachers have taken steps such as bringing home teaching-related activities, dedicating time for self-study on the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) manuals, and trying to create more engaging activities to motivate learners. However, teachers also expressed the need for more structured support and professional development to address these challenges more effectively.

Conclusions:

The results of this study conclude that while the Phil-IRI Reading Program is a valuable tool for assessing and improving student reading proficiency, its success largely depends on how well it is implemented by teachers in the field. The challenges identified—such as limited resources, time constraints, and the need for capacity-building—must be addressed to ensure consistent and meaningful program outcomes. Teachers' perspectives point to the need for a more structured, collaborative, and well-resourced implementation framework. With appropriate support, including localized materials, regular training, community involvement, and targeted interventions, the Phil-IRI program can be more responsive to learner needs and better aligned with school-level realities. Strengthening these areas offers clear opportunities to Student Engagement: Poor student engagement, driven by frustration and lack of motivation, is a major consequence of these challenges. The lack of engagement impacts learning outcomes, particularly in reading scores, as students become disengaged with the content.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct regular teacher training and capacity-building sessions focused on interpreting Phil-IRI results, designing responsive interventions, and applying effective reading strategies.
2. Develop and distribute localized and leveled reading materials that reflect the learners' real-life experiences and are aligned with their Phil-IRI reading levels.
3. Institutionalize dedicated reading time in the daily or weekly class schedule to ensure consistent reading practice for all learners.
4. Implement peer-assisted learning approaches, such as a structured "Reading Buddy" system, to support struggling readers through guided practice with more fluent peers.
5. Strengthen home-school and community partnerships by launching reading-at-home campaigns, organizing parent orientations, and creating community reading hubs.
6. Enhance the monitoring and evaluation systems at the school, district, and division levels to ensure timely data collection, feedback, and appropriate interventions based on Phil-IRI results.
7. Introduce student-centered motivational strategies, such as reading awards, certificates, and goal-setting tools, to foster reading interest and self-monitoring habits among learners.
8. Equip schools with ICT tools and digital resources to supplement traditional reading materials and provide interactive reading experiences.
9. Encourage peer mentoring among teachers to share best practices and collaboratively address challenges in Phil-IRI implementation.
10. Maintain updated individual learner reading profiles to track progress over time and guide instructional planning effectively.

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